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GENERAL GOSSIP.

We all know of coin collectors, post stamp collectors, manuscript collectors, and—tax collectors, but who ever heard of bean collectors? And yet, even such has just shuffled off this mortal coil in the Quartier du Val de Grace, Paris. M. D'L. Sevante had resided in the same house for thirty years, waited upon only by his housekeeper and refusing all other association save the company of his beans. The passion of his life was beans, and of these he had at the time of his death over 30,000 varieties properly classed and labelled, being specimens from every part of the world. Only a few days before his departure from this sphere he paid 500 francs for six beans of a rare variety. M. D'L. Savante should have followed his idiosyncrasy in this country and added to it a taste for pork also, that he might have by so doing improved our national dish, as John Bull terms it.

All who know that good fellow, and genuine humorist Chas. A. Browne, better known as Artemus Ward, will be sorry to hear that he is sadly and sorrowfully sick in London, in the very midst of his great success. He has struggled against it for months, but at last, dismissing all the showers of gold that were falling upon him, poor Artemus was obliged to come to the sad reality of a physician's certificate, and a retirement. He has hundreds of friends on this side of the water who look anxiously for good news of him.

There is a droll story going about to the credit of M. Nelton, the great surgeon, whose scalpel is a fairy wand, every wave of which is worth a rouleaux of gold. S——, the American artist, who is as apt at a practical joke as at a picture, called on the Doctor, as he said, "Just to have him look at a bad felon he had upon his thumb." The doctor looked, and pronounced that it should be cut. S—— turning away his head, declared he could not bear it. The Doctor quietly manipulating the thumb, while the face was averted, thrust the knife to the required spot, and in an instant the job was over, and S—— looked upon the little operation that should cost him 500 francs with a doleful countenance, and the exclamation "Oh! Monsieur, why did you cut it? I did not want it done!" Of course under these circumstances the surgeon could do no less than deprecate his haste, and the artist no less than keep entirely silent regarding payment. Still there was another phase. S——'s nerves were weak and the sight of the wound (?) was too much for him. A glance, and a fall upon the sofa followed, a faint, (or a feint) and a bottle of the surgeons best wine as a reviver became necessary. The story is told. S—— got safely through his operation, performed gratis, by the best surgeon in Paris, and had a bottle of fine wine—shall we say—brought in.

Patti has been joining in the general furore occasioned by the yacht business, and gave a breakfast to young Bennett. According to gossip it was rather a pleasant affair, and a gathering of all the clans, musical and artistic. The service of the little trifle is spoken of as something decidedly original, and of the pattern that has just arisen in the Gallic capital, or in other words of the Russ style, one course being marked as frozen—fruits, cereals, coffee, tea, meats, wines, everything frozen. This might be truly called "a cold bite."

Among the recent publications in London is

one entitled "Letters from Hell" in which life in that tropical clime is depicted in the warmest phrases, if not in those of the most alluring. It consists of a series of letters written directly from that place, and the collector and editor vouches strongly for their being genuine. An English newspaper in reviewing them says that a strong religious tone runs through the two volumes, but notwithstanding this the effect of reading them is decidedly depressing. The author at present is unknown but we presume as a matter of course that it is the same gentleman who some years since wrote "The Descent into Hell," the valuable contribution of which to literature would be entirely forgotten, if it were not for the remark of Douglas Jerrold, who, when asked by the author, whether he had seen his "Descent into Hell," answered, "No! but I would like to see it."

Almost any day the loungers on the Palais Royal may see Rossini. He walks slowly along the *pave*, his head bent forward, and his chin buried in his capacious cravat, rarely lifting his head save to acknowledge some passing friend. In his apparel he is excessively neat, almost approaching dandyism. His life seems one of quiet, calm content, no criticism ruffling him, no ambition arousing him, though those who are most intimate with him say that upon occasion the old fire is aroused, and he who produced the prayer in "Mose" and the trio in "Guillaume Tell" promises to give the world one more touch of his quality before he departs for his final home.

OUR MUSICAL FRIENDS, THE NOTES.

Solemn and stately the Semibreve, the father of this bright marvelous family, comes before our mind's vision. He is aged, grave, and oftentimes sad; re-echoing ever some heavenward aspiration, some sigh of the heart-broken, some tale too mournful to be told in words—pealing through old cathedral aisles, swelling, mounting, dying away like the heart's vain yearnings. In the olden time, when the dead, coffined in stone, were laid in their last resting-place with sound of dirge and requiem, he, and his still more solemn ancestor, the Breve, came together to mourn and pray for the departed, oftentimes accompanied by his fair partner the Minim, who was never far from him. Grave is she also, but a woman's heart is hers, and from it hope and life and gladness are ever ready to burst forth. She has, however, to look after her children, of whom she has five, the youngest a little fairy thing who was born a long time after the others, and is more sprite than mortal. Her eldest son, her first-born, the Crochet, is her pride and joy; but love, union, and harmony, are the distinguishing marks of the heaven-born family; they all form part and portion of each other; they are all *one*, and have but one heart and one soul amongst them. This slender, pensive youth, though he inherits somewhat of the character of his father and mother, is neither so stately nor so grave as they, for the warm blood of youth dances in his veins. Solid and firm is his step, and with proud confidence he treads the path of life; cheerful and hopeful is he, yet thoughtful, and taking time for reflection; not like his fair sister, the Quaver, who, though the eldest of the four young maidens, likes to prattle and talk well enough. A little busy-body is she, very useful when any brisk work has to be done, cheerful, and bright, and happy, always talking, in a merry, quiet way, that tires nobody. She is a fair and graceful creature, very loving and caressing, but sometimes a shade of melancholy steals over her, and then she makes us heave a sigh at the simple tale she tells.

Her frolicking young sister, the Semiquaver, never minds a word her grave father and mother

says to her, but away she goes, and her nimble little feet patter like the rain. Up and down, here and there, like a butterfly on a summer's day, she rests not a moment. Her merry tongue tells of all sorts of gay doings—of the streamlets in the mountain-forests that leap down jagged rocks, and go hurrying on through moss and pebbles, to get down to the broad river and away to the wild ocean—of the fluttering, twittering birds, and the ever-trembling leaves of the tall trees. Many joyous tales has she to tell of feast and song, and revelry; and she and the Quaver would keep us long listening, but that her hair-brained sister, the Demisemiquaver, comes scampering in. There is no more quiet now—up and off in a race, try and catch her if you can. Flashing like lightning, bright as a sun-beam, sparkling like diamonds, she tells us deep mysteries of the earth, and air, and roaring tempest, of the rushing torrent, and the wild havoc worked by winds and waves. Anon, lighter than the thistle-down that floats upon the July breeze, she murmurs sweet, soft heart-secrets; but her voice is then low and faint, and is not given to all to understand her fairy-like language.

The last of this mystic group is a child of these latter days of steam and electricity. Though bearing a likeness to her brilliant sister, the Demisemiquaver, people are sometime inclined to think that the Senidemisemiquaver has lost her wits altogether. In breathless haste she flies through the air, swifter than time—ay, more rapid than thought itself; flashing meteor-like, regardless of space, through boundless realms of harmony, till at last, after astonishing the world, she sinks to rest at her father's feet!

LITERARY CURIOSITIES

The case of fear is something very ludicrous. Charles Gustavus was besieging Prague, when a boor of extraordinary visage desired admittance to his tent, and, being allowed entrance, by way of amusing the King, offered to eat a whole hog weighing two hundred pounds. The old General was present, and soldier as he was, had not got rid of the prejudices of his childhood, suggested to the King that the boor should be burnt as a sorcerer. "Sir," said the boor, "If your majesty will but make that old gentleman take off his sword and his spurs, I will eat him before your face, before I begin the pig." The General could not stand his proposal, especially as it was accompanied by a most hideous expansion of the peasant's jaws. Without uttering a word, the veteran turned round, ran out of the tent and thought himself not safe until he had arrived at his headquarters, where he remained about twenty-four hours locked up before he had got rid of the panic.

Queen Christina, of Sweden, who was as peculiar in her nightdress as in almost everything else, and who used an uncouth linen wrapper instead of a night-cap, having spent a restless day in bed, ordered a band of Italian musicians, from the opera, to approach near to her curtains, which were close drawn, and strive to amuse her. Being pleased with the voice of some of the singers, she suddenly thrust her homely, ill-dressed head from behind the curtains, exclaiming, "Mort diables! Comme il chante bien!" This sudden appearance of such a hideous figure ended the song and put to flight the Italians.

The great and learned Selden defended the "Witch Act." His argument is curious. "The law against witches does not prove there be any, but it punishes the malice of those people that use such means to take away men's lives. If one should profess that, by turning his hat thrice and crying 'buzz,' he could take away a man's life (though in truth he could do no such thing,) yet this were a just law, made by the State, that whosoever should turn his hat thrice and cry 'buzz,' with an intention to take a man's life, shall be put to death."